

Blogs, Wikis, Docs: Which is right for your lesson?

A Comparison Table

	Blogs	Wikis	Docs
Nature	A blog is a web log, a frequently updated website. More - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog	A wiki is a web page that visitors can quickly edit. More - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki	Google Docs provides an online office suite that allows you to access your documents from any computer via a web browser. It also facilitates collaboration and sharing. More - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Docs
Authors	Usually only one person or a small team can post. Each post is one author's voice. Others can only leave comments.	Many. Most wikis allow either anonymous editing or editing by a limited number of approved users.	Each document is created by an individual, who can then invite collaborators.
Collaborators	Usually visitors can comment. Sometimes a small team has the ability to post.	All visitors can be collaborators - or access to edit the wiki can be limited to approved users.	Docs can be shared with a small team of collaborators at one time (synchronously). A larger number of users can collaborate asynchronously.
Organization	Reverse chronological order. The newest post appears at the top of the page and older posts move down until archived (usually by month). Most blog systems also support creation of a few static pages, such as an about page or class expectations page.	A wiki site is a hyperlinked collection of individual pages.	Each document is separate. Users can view all docs that they create or collaborate on at their Google Docs home page, which allows organization in folders. A published document can be viewed as an individual website.
Updates	Frequency of updates varies, but blogs tend to be updated more often and more consistent than wikis and docs. Visitors return often to blogs that are updated frequently and consistently. RSS users can also subscribe to a feed so that new posts come to them automatically.	Wikis are updated as needed, usually when new information about the topic becomes available, information changes, or a mistake is found. RSS users can subscribe to a feed so that they are notified of changes automatically.	Docs are usually created and edited for a specific purpose, but they can be saved indefinitely for reuse at a later time.
	Blogs are easily created and easily updated.	Wikis maintain a history of all revisions to each page, including who made what changes.	Google Docs are the best choice for synchronous collaboration on a single document - with some delay, users can

Benefits	<p><i>If you can email, you can blog!</i> And adding images and files is as easy as adding attachments.</p> <p>Some blog systems allow authors to embed media.</p> <p>It's a Two-Way Technology - visitors can leave comments.</p> <p>Most blogs allow teams of authors with various permissions.</p> <p>Some blogging systems allow users to download a backup of their blog.</p>	<p>Most wikis also provide a discussion forum for each page, though this is not always a threaded discussion.</p> <p>Most wikis allow different permissions for different users.</p> <p><i>If you can word process, you use a wiki!</i> And adding images and files is as easy as adding attachments to an email.</p> <p>Most wikis allow users to download an html backup.</p>	<p>document - with some delay, users can see others changes as they occur! The system handles conflicting changes well.</p> <p>A history of revisions is kept for all documents.</p> <p>Each spreadsheet has a built in chat room for collaborators.</p> <p>Each presentation has a built in chat room for viewers.</p> <p>Upload and export most word processing and spreadsheet file types.</p>
Drawbacks	<p>No multiple authors on a single post (usually). No history of revisions on a single post (usually).</p> <p>Though archives are searchable and can be organized by category, it can be difficult to find old content.</p> <p>Some blogging systems do not allow users to download a backup of their blog.</p>	<p>Users can overwrite each others' changes if they are editing the same page at the same time. Wikis are best for asynchronous collaboration, not synchronous collaboration.</p> <p>Though many wiki systems now have WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editors, some wikis require additional knowledge of wiki syntax that is different than HTML. This is helpful for troubleshooting problems with WYSIWYG editors, too. Wiki syntax can be different for different wiki systems.</p> <p>Though a history of revisions is available, archives of old content are not easily accessible by category or searching.</p>	<p>The history of revisions can be difficult to navigate.</p> <p>Old data may be difficult to find because it is not easily accessible by category or searching.</p> <p>Only a small number of users can collaborate synchronously. (About 10 in docs and presentations, but Google says 50 can join a spreadsheet at one time.)</p> <p>Docs only allow two levels of permissions: viewers & collaborators (plus owners).</p> <p>Importing and exporting files is limited to only a few formats (but Microsoft Office formats are included: .doc, .xls, .ppt)</p>
	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Technology and Life (My professional blog) • Clark's Blog (A personal blog about my son - with much more multi-media than edtechlife) 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Podcast article on Wikipedia • The Palm Springs USD tech plan was written on a wiki! 	

Examples	<p>multi-media than edutechme)</p> <p>Spectrum of Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher web sites Example • Class web sites Example • Learning journals Example • Book Clubs Example • Connect with Authors and Experts Example • Pen Pals Example (See Global Awareness and Cultural Literacy Through Electronic Dialog) • Professional Development Example • Reflective Practice Example (Also, don't miss David Warlick's blog.) • More Examples: http://www.supportblogging.com • Get Started: http://www.blogger.com or http://www.edublogs.org <p>Subject Specific Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algebra Example • Art Example • English Example • Music Example • Physical Ed. Example • Science Example • Social Studies Example 	<p>More Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wikipedia - http://www.wikipedia.org • Dave Conlay's Aristotle Experiment - http://aristotle-experiment.wikispaces.com • Eva Wagner's Houghton-Mifflin Tech Resources Wiki - http://hmtech.wikispaces.com • Eva Wagner's Technology Integration Projects for Grades K-3 - http://techtips.wikispaces.com • Dan McDowell's Wiki Resources - http://www.ahistoryteacher.com/necc2006/ • More Workshop Wikis - http://edtechlife.com/?page_id=1399 • More Examples (A wiki about wikis in education!) - http://educationalwikis.wikispaces.com/ • Get Started: http://www.wikispaces.com/site/for/teachers/ <p>More On Educational Wikis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Wiki? • The Infinite Wiki Machine (Answers the question "when is a wiki better than a blog?") • Wiki While You Work (Long Video) • Wikis in Plain English (Short Video) • See another great workshop about wikis (from CTAP IV): http://www.ctap4.org/infolit/wiki.htm 	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Demo Form • The results (a published spreadsheet) <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Docs for Educators • Google Docs (Session from the Google Teacher Academy) • Google Docs in The Classroom (PDF from the Google Teacher Academy) • Create a Permeable Classroom - Part I: Google Docs Presentations • Google Docs in plain English • Get Started: http://docs.google.com
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